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ABSTRACT

This paper establishes a uniform drug abuse policy for organizational employees. This policy is modeled after recommendations made by the National Council on Alcoholism, Inc., and deals with alcoholism as an element of the drug abuse problem. Organizational behavior understudy involves the standard of on-the-job-performance. When less-than-acceptable job performance is consistent or declining, the employee should be advised of his unacceptable performance. This policy pertains to the employee desiring to correct his job performance, but who needs professional assistance not available within the organization. (Author)

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DRUG ABUSE, THE COMPANY POLICY

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The objective of this paper is to establish a uniform drug abuse policy for the employees of this organization. This policy is modeled after recommendations made by the National Council on Alcoholism, Inc. However, this policy will deal with alcoholism as an element of the drug abuse problem. Drug abuse is considered the nations leading health problem and is defined as the individuals reliance and use of chemical substances, inducing the user to exhibit actions and behavior not normally associated with the individual in the absence of these chemical substances.

The behavior this company is concerned with is the standard of on-the-job performance. When less than acceptable job performance is consistent or declining, the employee should be advised of his unacceptable performance. This policy pertains to the employee desiring to correct his job performance, but is in need of professional assistance not available within the company.

I. Statement of Policy (taken in considerable part from: A JOINT UNION-MANAGEMENT APPROACH TO ALCOHOLISM RECOVERY PROGRAM)

Drug abuse is recognized as a disease for which there is effective treatment and rehabilitation, and is defined as a disease in which a person's consumption of chemical substances or reliance on chemical substances definitely and repeatedly interferes with that individual's health and/or job performance.

1. Persons who suspect that they may have a drug problem, at any stage, are encouraged to seek diagnosis, and to follow through with the treatment that may be prescribed by qualified professionals, in order to arrest the disease as early as possible.
2. Any persons having this disease will receive the same careful consideration and offer of treatment that is presently extended, under existing benefit plans, to all those having any other disease.
3. The same benefits and insurance coverages that are provided for all other diseases under established benefit plans, will be available for individuals who accept medically approved treatment for drug abuse.
4. This policy is concerned with those instances of drug abuse which affect the job performance of the individual and is solely intended to restore the individual to responsibility of his actions as an employee.

5. It will be the responsibility of all employees, including management and supervisory personnel, to implement this policy and to follow the procedures which have been designed to assure that any employee requesting drug abuse diagnosis and treatment will not be in jeopardy of losing job security or promotional opportunities.
6. Referral for diagnosis and treatment will be based on job performance of the individual employee. In every case, the individual employee is responsible for accepting diagnosis and treatment.
7. An individuals refusal to accept referral of diagnosis and treatment will result in the formal evaluation of his job performance and his willingness to improve job performance. If it is determined an employee is unable to correct his job performance and he is unwilling to obtain professional assistance in dealing with this lack of acceptable performance, the employee will be terminated as an employee of this company.
8. The confidential nature of the medical records of individuals participating in a drug abuse treatment program will be strictly observed.
9. Employees participating in this program will be expected to meet existing job performance standards and established work rules. This may be in accordance with accepted and existing sick leave and medical absences policys.

II. The Role of the Company

In an effort to manage the increasing cost of labor, which includes labor turnover, absenteeism, employee accidents and direct training cost of an employee, we must make the most efficient use of the human resource available to us. The human resource comes to us in a variety of skills and educational levels from the surrounding community. As a company within this community, we are faced with the competitive forces of other organizations in attracting and retaining qualified personnel. By economic practice and responsibility, we are mandated to make the best use of these resources in accomplishing our organizational objectives.

Current information indicates from 3 to 5% of our employees may be involved, in varying stages of development, with the dependence of drugs and their effects pronounced in their job performance. As an industry, as a company, as individuals we are faced with the contemporary problems associated with drug abuse.

Drugs, which includes alcohol, lowers the efficiency of an employee to a point that he becomes a liability to this organizations efficient functioning and the general well being of the community in general. By allowing the drug abusing employee to remain ~~the~~ in our employment, we are providing him with the means to financing and social support needed to

carry on this lifestyle. If we decide to terminate this employee, we are disposing of a trained and knowledgeable resource. In these "ecological times" we have found many economical and profitable methods in salvaging and recycling resources that were, in days past, previously discarded as waste products and cheaper to replace from raw materials. A recycling method must be considered in the efficient management of our human resources, our employees.

The first step in formulating a "recyling" program for the drug abusing employee must come in the form of an overall statement of company policy. The purpose of this policy should not be to develop an organizational haven for drug abusers, or as an avenue to be followed in dismissing an employee discovered to be a drub abuser. Rather, this will be a policy developed with the benefit of the organization and employee in mind. To be effective, this policy must be supported by top management, with the following reasoning:

> ...top men of the organization must back and consistently support such a program or it settles into the same routine as bond drives, company picnics and the Christmas party. And that support must extend beyond the corporate walls. (Wilkinson:30)

We can best support the community by supporting a rehabilitative program in drug abuse. This organization will establish a basis of support, and seek support, in this program.

This business organization will not become a substitute for social service agencies. A business organization is not prepared to diagnose or treat the drug abuser, but should be in a position to make correct and expedient referrals to the appropriate social service agency. And support these agencies in every manner possible. Social service agencies are financially supported by the taxation process, and as heavy contributors to this taxation, the business organization and employee should utilize these agencies whenever possible. (Ebbs:18)

The most significant area affected will be the reduction of absenteeism. Hence, this is an area to be scrutinized as an attempt to identify a drug abusing employee. In a program established by General Motors, of 2700 employees enrolled, a study of 71 of these employees indicated

85.5% Reduction in lost man hours.
46.7% Drop in sick leaves.
72.0% Cut in sickness and accident benefits paid to those employees. (GM's Fight:45)

While on-the-job accidents are not characteristic of the drug abuser, the off-the-job accident rate is three to four times higher for the abuser. Increasing the cost of insurance, increasing sick leave and decreasing productivity. (Trice:482) Reduced productivity, in 1970, cost this nation $10 Billion, a drug addict cost society a minimum of $54,000 per year. (Pogalies:10)

Beyond contributing to their personal detriment and downgrading of productive work effort, drug abusers cause a general detiorating of

fellow employees morale. Compounding the problem is the reluctance of the supervisor and fellow employee to identify the drug abuser. Studies indicate 20% of drug abusers receive "little or no help" in concealing their abuse. "A form of on-the-job absenteeism occurs as efficiency declines," and 80% of our employees are suspected of harboring this information. (Trice:482)

For this policy to be effective, every employee must be made aware of its existence and how it operates. Training in identification and legal requirements related to the drug abuse policy will be provided to all supervisory level personnel, and individual employees as they request to participate. The Personnel Department will be specifically charged with its continued support of the Drug Abuse Policy as previously outlined.

III. The Role of the Personnel Department

The personnel department is specifically charged with carrying out and implementing the company's drug abuse policy. The department head of personnel is designated as the Drug Abuse Representative in carrying out this policy. However, in the case of termination of an employee suspected of drug abuse, the Drug Abuse Representative is directed to consult with legal and medical specialist concerning the employee's dismissal.

This company will not hire, employ or contract with in any manner, a drug abusing individual. The drug abuser is substandard in job performance, a potential threat to his fellow employees and considered a financial threat to the company should he be employed. Historically, most companies learn they have employed a drug abuser as a result of actual or attempted thefts of the employer's property. (Keltz:15) For this reason, the company is required to take the following measures.

These measures will attempt to screen out the drug abuser applying for employment with this company. This will call for the establishment of medical and professional examinations for <u>every</u> applicant seeking employment. The use of medical and professional examinations will be coupled with the interviewers contacting previous employers and personal references of the applicant, concerning the work habits, reason for

resigning/termination of previous employment and to specifically request information of the applicants use of chemical substances in an abusive manner. Those parties responsible for interviewing job applicants, and counseling of an employee, will not rely on their personal observance of the individual in determining the existence of a drug abuse problem. In every case of suspected drug abuse by an employee, and in every case of new job applicants, determination must be made by appropriate medical and professional examination and diagnosis. In each case, prompt referral is required before further consideration of the situation can be made.

Applicants:

If medical examination and background investigation does not indicate drug abuse, continue with employment consideration.

If the appropriate medical examination and background investigation reveals the applicant is an active drug abuser, the interviewer should discuss the results with the applicant. There is the possibility of authorized and acceptable drug usage is being carried on by the applicant. Discuss the applicants reasons for use of the drug with the medical examiner. If the applicant offers no plausible explanation for the use of the drugs, the applicant must be dropped from further consideration for employment.

Employee:

When an employee's on-the-job performance is consistently substandard, the supervisor is required to take appropriate corrective action. Failure to do so is failure to perform the essential requirements of his position. The supervisor is required to consult with the employee and determine why job performance is less than established standards. There can be many reasons for not meeting these requirements and in most cases the corrective action can be initiated with the direction of the supervisor. In those cases where the employee indicates a drug abuse problem as basis for unsatisfactory performance, the supervisor is required to direct the employee to the Drug Abuse Representative for the company.

The Drug Abuse Representative is required to review the performance of the employee and discuss the performance findings with the employee. The Drug Abuse Representative must determine if the employee should be referred for diagnosis and treatment for a health problem contributing to the employees poor work performance.

Upon the completion of a medical examination and there is diagnosis of drug abuse by the employee, the employee must be given the opportunity to present information indicating a contrary diagnosis. In the absence of such an argument from the employee, the opportunity to participate in the company's drug abuse program is made available to the employee. Based on evidence supplied by the employee, the supervisor and medical

examination, the employee may be returned to work by the Drug Abuse Representative as indicated by the evidence of obtained information. Or the employee may be discharged if the evidence indicated drug abuse and the employee refuses to participate in a treatment program.

The employee is charged with complying with referrals for medical examination and diagnosis, and following the prescribed treatment. Failure to participate in corrective action programs and upgrading of job performance will result in the immediate dismissal of the employee. The effectiveness of a drug treatment program is solely determined on the basis of the employee meeting job performance standards. The employee's immediate supervisor, the Drug Abuse Representative and the employee must meet periodically in a formal review of this performance. Excluding the initial referral to the Drug Abuse Representative, the supervisor retains the right to terminate the employee based on job performance during or after entering into compliance with the drug abuse policy of this company.

IV. The Role of the Supervisor

As with all employee relations programs, the immediate supervisor is the specific functionary to introduce and implement this drug abuse policy. Supervisors are in day-to-day contact with the employee, knows his personal mannerism, work habits and job performance. Every employee, staff, line, management, is supervised directly by an appointed and responsible party or in a peer group situation. Peer supervision occurs when a tradesman offers criticism to a colleague, appraises his performance or interacts with his fellow worker in such a manner that it calls for his technical expertise in making a judgement.

The supervisor is charged with the orderly operation of his department or function, therefore, he must be responsive to the problems and potential problems created by the drug abuser. Regarding alcoholism, the problem drinker will work fulltime during most of his developing alcoholism. (Trice:482) Fewer than 5% of all alcoholics end up on "skid row."

When a drug abuser is allowed to continue his lifestyle in the work place, the morale of fellow employees is severly impaired and the supervisors work is impaired. (Trice:482-3) Absenteeism is estimated to be two and one-half times greater for the drug abuser than for the non-abusing employee, resulting in other employees picking up the abuser's work load compounding scheduling problems. (Chambers:474) In 1970, of Florida non-

agricultural industry, the drug abuser represented a $72 Million annual loss. Forty to sixty-percent of alcoholics are thought to combine drugs with alcohol. (Chusmir)

The effectiveness in treating and rehabilitating the drug abuser can be significantly affected by the supervisors participation in the precess. The supervisors position of influence with drug abuser is equated with that support of the abusers family. Lutheran General Hospital, Chicago, estimates a 50% recovery rate for alcoholics. But, it can be as high as 80% when the employer participates and supports this treatment. Lutheran General goes a step further and supports "arm twisting by the boss" to induce the abuser to enter a treatment program. (Alcoholism:New Victims:78-79) From the National Council on Alcoholism:

> ...Fostering of such moral support, on the community and labor-management scenes, as one of its most important functions (as social service agency).
>
> His friends, his family, his neighbors, and his boss--especially--must try to understand and help. (one In Every:26A)

As a representative of the company, the supervisor must be willing to participate in the employee's treatment. Rehabilitated employees characteristically are "establishing performance records that would blow the scale on many productivity studies." (Wilkinson:31) With the importance and need for involvement established, there is a need for the supervisor to be trained in recognizing and dealing with the drug abuser. Training will benefit the supervisor and the company by returning a

rehabilitated employee to full and productive employment. The supervisor must be trained in the legal aspects of handling drug abuse and its suspected appearance in the workplace. (Trice:476) Suspicion is not adequate grounds for dismissing or treating an employee for drug abuse. It is beyond the supervisors ability to attempt treatment, his role is simply to refer the employee for proper and professional examination.

By observing erratic behavior, absenteeism and the many indicators of drug abuse, the supervisor is urged to make the required effort and ascertain the employee is not afflicted with a non-drug related problem. At any rate, timely referral should be made to the appropriate individual within the company. To be effective in this drug abuse program, each supervisor will be required to participate in the necessary training programs established by the company and, in turn, provide his subordinates the company's view of drug abuse as it relates to the employee and his performance. Emphasis is made again, this organization is not capable of diagnosing or treating the drug abuser. Treatment must be left to organizations outside this organization. (Lotterhos:17) By supporting this company and its drug abuse policy, the employees of this company can participate in the rehabilitation of the drug abuser and help return him to a normal and productive role.

The importance of this drug abuse policy cannot be overstated for the individual, the company and the community. The importance of the super-

visor actively working within this policy is paramount to its success. Social drug abuse programs, those service organizations originating outside the workplace, claim a 30 to 50% cure rate. Industrial programs, which encompass social service agencies, have documented cure rates of 60 to 75%. There are approximately 7500 treatment centers in the United States, a common element in most cures is group support. (Time:74) With industrial programs, "the existence of a program indicates more importance than the type of programs." (Lotterhos:15)

V. The Role of the Employee

Drug abuse in industry is thought to be as high as 5% for the national labor force, an estimated annual cost of $15 Billion is the end result of this abuse. Drug abuse in the workplace is a serious threat to every employee, the objectives of this company and the community in which we muat live. This company is implementing a policy of identifying and treating the drug abusing employee. During the pre-employment phase, every attempt is made to screen out the drug abusing individual; however, "no one expects employees to remain free of all health problems--including addiction." (Wilkinson:31) This company recognizes drug abuse as a health problem and will give its complete support to those employees seeking treatment under this policy.

As a company, we are concerned with the maintenance of an effective and efficient workforce. Competitive forces within our industry demand this. Social conscience demands this. As an employee affected with a health problem, the drug abuser will be accorded the same opportunities of diagnosis and treatment that prevail within this organization and resources of the community. In most cases of drug abuse this will consist of referral to an outside agency possessing the required expertise and knowledge for effective treatment. When an employee allows the use of chemical substances to consistently and effectively reduce his job performance, the employee is required to take the necessary action needed to correct his job performance.

It is anticipated that some employees will actively seek the aid and support of the company in the treatment of a drug abuse problem. In every case this aid and support will be given by the company personnel as may be required in each case. Every employee is urged to contact his supervisor regarding the application and operation of this policy. Information and training will be provided to the extent that an employee request participation. The active support of all company employees is needed to effectively establish this program. Indeed, the moral support offered to a fellow employee engaged in treatment for drug abuse significantly enhances that individuals chances of recovery.

Your supervisor is charged with the general operation of his department, in order to do this he is also charged with the health, safety and general well being of each employee of this company.. Any employee desiring information or treatment under the drug abuse program will have the full support of his supervisor in obtaining the desired service. An employee's job security or promotional responsibilities will not be jeopardized by participation in this program. The drug abuse program is viewed as a means of returning an employee to a responsible standard of job performance.

This company does not have the expertise required to diagnosis and treat the drug abuser and will rely on the processional resources of the immediate community for this service. With the assistance of the supervisor, Drug Abuse Representative, medical specialist and the employee.

referral will be made to an appropriate community agency for treatment. Referral will be based on the request of an employee, or on the basis of medical diagnosis indicating drug abuse.

When an employee is discovered to be a drug abuser and his job performance is considered to be inadequate, the employee is subject to immediate dismissal. However, those employees choosing to participate under the company's drug abuse program will be referred as indicated. An employee is entirely responsible for complying with referrals for treatment or diagnosis. Refusal to accept diagnosis and treatment of a health problem, and this refusal continues to be detrimental to the employee's job performance, will result in the termination of the employee.

When an employee is undergoing treatment for drug abuse, the employee, the supervisor, the Drug Abuse Representative and a member involved with the active treatment of the employee, will periodically meet to evaluate the treatment program as it affects the employees job performance. The performance on the job, the commitment of the drug abuser to the program and rehabilitative progress will be key elements in considering the effectiveness of this program. In cases where the employee is determined to be actively participating in his personal rehabilitation, but, the effectiveness of the program is not indicated in the job performance of the employee, alternative treatment programs must be sought for the employee.

This company is of the opinion that drug abuse originates from a variety of factors and is not always responsive to established treatment procedures. Because of this, employees are urged to contribute new information concerning the treatment and availability of treatment programs within the community. Without the support of the community, fellow employees and the company, a drug abuser has severely limited chances of recovery. Drug abuse is a social and personal problem and requires treatment in the same manner.

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